

RELEASE
IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: (Reuters) Afghans say two students killed by NATO troops

From: Simmons, Krista M
To: NEWS-Afghanistan; NEWS-Mahogany
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Sent: Sat Oct 23 08:26:57 2010
Subject: (Reuters) Afghans say two students killed by NATO troops

KABUL (Reuters) - Afghan officials accused NATO-led troops of killing two school boys in central Afghanistan on October 23 after a patrol came under fire by Taliban insurgents, but foreign troops said the circumstances were unclear.

A statement released by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said two civilians had possibly been killed in the Maidan Shahr district of Wardak province, west of Kabul, when insurgents attacked the patrol.

"During the attack, three Afghan citizens on a motorcycle entered the engagement area. Two of them fell off the vehicle and were taken away by local villagers," ISAF said.

It said their condition could not be determined before they were taken away. The incident was under investigation, ISAF said.

However, a spokesman for the Wardak governor said ISAF troops had fired indiscriminately and killed two students about 30 miles west of Kabul when a rocket was fired at their convoy. He said the rocket was apparently fired by the Taliban.

Wardak police chief Nawas Haqyar said ISAF troops were returning fire and mistakenly killed the students. The attack prompted a brief demonstration by angry villagers, demanding an explanation from NATO forces over the killing.